



Symbolism

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Johann Adam Möhler (1796-1838)
translated by James Burton Robertson



Symbolism

Möhler was professor theology at the Tübingen University where both Catholics and Protestants taught and studied. In 1832 he published *Symbolism*, a work that examined the doctrines of original sin, grace and free will as held by the different Christian confessions. It caused a storm of controversy in the Protestant nations of Europe. In it he turned the weapons furnished by Hegel, called the “Protestant Aquinas”, against Protestantism. His method and style were supported by the use of facts, texts, and documents. By 1838 *Symbolism* had been translated into eight languages.

In an age when the Catholic Church found itself divided into two camps, the “German” and the “Roman”, Döllinger, a former pupil of Möhler’s, when addressing a group of scholars at Munich in 1863 once famously quipped that the former were defending Catholicism with rifles while the latter were still using bows and arrows. The “Romans”, however, would succeed in silencing their “German” brethren at the First Vatican Council and cut off a branch bearing good fruit. A rediscovery of the “German” school is long overdue and there is no better place to start than Möhler’s *Symbolism*.

Running time 13:31:15

Read by Jeff Allen



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